

LANESBOROUGH FINANCE COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
February 25, 2008

Members Present: W. Stevens, R. Brower, A. Terranova, A. Flynn

Meeting called to order at 7:00 PM

W. Stevens reviewed the MGL Statutes covering revolving funds. A recreational revolving fund is covered by MGL Section 44, Chapter 53D, and does not have to be renewed each year unless the town has established an ordinance or by-law to that effect. Other revolving funds (Section 44, Chapter 53E ½) require approval annual at a town meeting. All revolving fund managers are required to report the income and expenses annually to the Board of Selectmen.

Meeting with Board of Assessors: (E. Christensen, G. Bean, R. Wade)

Levy Limit Calculation:

FY 2008 Levy Limit	\$5,968,211
Plus 2.5%	149,205
Sub-Total	\$6,117,416
New Growth (Estimated)	60,000
FY 2009 Levy Limit	\$6,117,416
Debt Exclusion	309,367
FY 2009 Maximum Levy	\$6,486,783

The overlay amount used in the estimated tax recap calculation done by W. Stevens has been set at \$100,000 and was approved by the Assessors. There was some discussion that two major taxpayers in town have pending abatement requests.

The salaries have been requested to be increased 5%, based on a comparison of the Assessors increased versus the Treasurer and Collector's salaries. The committee was also reminded that the Treasurer keeps the fees that are assessed during the year, which was stated to be about \$6,000 to \$8,000 annually. G. Bean suggested that by splitting these fees with the Assistant Treasurer Collector, there would be no need to increase the Assistant Collectors salary more than normal.

The expenses of the Assessors are level funded for FY 2009.

The Assessors recommended changing the eligibility limits for Clause 41C Senior Exemption Options to receive a reduction of the tax levy. These have not been changed since 1987 and should be consistent with the increase in the cost of living.

They also recommended to increase the minimum amount of the personal property exemption. This was not discussed during this meeting, but was include in the handout provided.

They recommend an appropriation of \$1,070 to purchase an updated computer for the Assessor's Clerk.

They recommend an appropriation of \$2,500 to update the tax maps to include buildings constructed since the maps were drawn with aerial photographs from 11/18/2001.

Since the Assessors had to meet with the Selectmen at 7:45, further discussions were postponed until a later date to be determined.

Meeting with Highway Department (Bill Decelles)

The Highway Department were reviewed and discusses with Bill Decelles. It was decided to increase the requested number to include an increase in the electricity account \$1,000 since the rate will increase almost 50% in December. Also based on diesel fuel costs, it was decided to increase the Diesel account by \$1,000. Therefore the requested amount for Highway Department expenses will be \$114,530.

The wages were requested for 3% increase for present Highway Department employees, and to add a new hire for \$31,762. An employee left 4 years ago and has not been replaced. Bill Decelles stated that there is a lot of work that cannot be completed due to manpower shortage. The finance committee reminded Bill Decelles that the actual figure of cost to the town would include the benefits, insurance, and unemployment insurance costs.

Winter Roads account has been increased \$3,000 from last year. They are presently at the point of exceeding the allocated amount already this year.

The Highway is requesting a new dump truck at a cost of \$140,000. It has not been decided if this would be recommended to be a lease-purchase, or loan, or purchase in one lump sum with free cash. Al Terranova asked if it were possible that if another town (or city) nearby was also in the market to purchase a new truck, it Lanesborough could join with them and perhaps get a "quantity" discount. This would need to be discussed with Paul Boudreau who is the Town Purchasing Manager.

Future requests for vehicles would be:

- 2010 One-ton Dump Truck \$53,000
- 2011 New loader to replace 1994 John Deere
- 2012 New grader to replace 1986 Dresser
- 2013 Dump truck, with sander to replace 2002 4x4

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM